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OFFICE OF DIRECTOR
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Mr. Tolson ☒
Mr. Boardman ☒
Mr. Belmont ☒
Mr. Mohr _____
Mr. Nease _____
Mr. Parsons _____
Mr. Rosen _____
Mr. Tamm _____
Mr. Trotter _____
Mr. Jones _____
Mr. Clayton _____
Tele. Room _____
Mr. Holloman _____
Miss Holmes _____
Miss Gandy ☒

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

March 18, 1958

TO: Honorable J. Edgar Hoover
Director, Federal Bureau
of Investigation

Attached is a personal and
confidential letter that I have
received from a friend of mine,
along with my reply to him.

I would appreciate it if you
would give me your opinion regarding
this incident.

Bay
Robert Cutler

2 ENCLOSURE
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EX-136

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[Signature]

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☐ Regular Request (Analytical Search)
☒ All References (Subversive & Nonsubversive)
☐ Subversive References Only
☐ Nonsubversive References Only
☐ Main _____ References Only

☐ Restricted to Locality of _____
☐ Exact Name Only (On the Nose)
☐ Buildup ☐ Variations
☐ Check for Alphabetical Loyalty Form

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UNESCO

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC
AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

Office of the Representative to the United Nations
New York

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March 13, 1958

Personal and Confidential

General Robert Cutler
White House
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Bobby, ~~CUT HERE~~

It bothers me that I never seem to get around to writing you except about a problem or about what appears to me to be an opportunity. This time, it is the opportunity.

The other day I had lunch with a friend of mine at the Overseas Press Club, and he told me a rather interesting story, which I am about to repeat to you, with his permission, and with my own comment that even at this late date, in view of the current situation, it might be well for him to pick up the suggestion which is the point of his narrative.

My friend is [redacted] whom I have known now about a year and see occasionally at the Club. He is a film director and cameraman with his own independent operation here in New York, but also with a contract with CBS which keeps him busy on a daily basis. He was in the army during World War II. [redacted]

He is a first-rate documentary producer, with a considerable reputation in that field. He was, among other things, the first professional cameraman from the "west" to go to East Berlin. I believe that at that time he was working for the March of Time.

In any event, when he gets off the train from Manhattan to Glen Cove, he frequently steps into a cocktail lounge which is located on the road from the station to his home for a drink before going to his address. Approximately three years ago, at the bar in this particular cocktail lounge, he struck up a casual conversation with another man standing at the bar, a person he had never seen before and has never seen since. This person not only knew his name, but knew his life history from start to finish. And he would up by suggesting to [redacted] that he ought to do some

Memo Delmont to
Boardman
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Let to Cutler
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documentaries on Russia, and suggesting moreover, that he should get in touch with the Russian Consulate (or is it a Consulate General) in New York to make arrangements for doing such documentaries.

[redacted] did not get in touch with the Russian Consulate, and he told me that until he recounted the story to me today, he had told it to only one other person - a personal friend of his who was, at the time, in the Central Intelligence Agency.

I told him that I thought that, even now, he should follow through on this, but only after consultation with the people in the State Department or others in the Government, so that he went to the Russians, if at all, only with the prior knowledge of our Government, however unofficial such a "clearance" might be, technically speaking.

It seems to me that it just might be possible, in view of the fact that the Russians themselves have so obviously taken a first step at least in paving the way, for [redacted] to organize an expedition, with proper clearances from both governments, and with sufficient freedom of action to do a series of documentaries in Russia which could be enormously useful to the American people and the American Government in the sense that they would be illuminating about facts and conditions inside the Soviet Union.

I undertook to write personally to you, (I am writing the same to [redacted]), not because you are people who would become officially involved if it ever reached the point of any official involvement, but because you are people in the Government whom I happen to know personally, and whose judgment I respect completely.

I would much appreciate it if you could give me some indication of your reaction to this general idea - and general only at this point. Making all the necessary assumptions, do you think that the idea is worth pursuing?

The next time I am in Washington, which I think will be sometime this spring, I hope to be in touch with you -- if not to see you, at least to have a telephone conversation.

All the best,

[redacted]

March 18, 1958

Dear [redacted]

I acknowledge your personal letter relative to [redacted] and his rather unusual experience in a cocktail lounge at Glen Cove.

My personal opinion is that every opportunity, if one is indeed offered, for Americans to take motion pictures within Russia should be utilized. We are endeavoring to encourage various kinds of exchanges of people and cultural material: this undertaking would seem to be along the same lines.

I have recently seen at a motion picture theater in Washington a long documentary film by an American about various parts of Russia called "This Is Russia." It was worth seeing for a number of reasons. I think more of its kind would be useful.

Because of the unusual character of [redacted] meeting with his unknown interlocutor, I should think for his own sake he would wish before undertaking any steps with the Russian Consulate to tell his story to the FBI. At least, if such an incident occurred to me, I should wish to make a report of it, during a period when foreign espionage seems to be increasing.

Beyond that, I should think a check with the Central Intelligence Agency would be desirable to ascertain its considered views. Perhaps they would not agree with my personal feeling. I have taken the liberty of transmitting this correspondence to the Deputy Director of Central Intelligence to obtain his views, and have asked him to let me know his opinion regarding this matter.

Sincerely yours,

Robert Cutler

Room 2201
42nd Street at First Avenue
New York 17, New York

cc: [redacted]
Honorable J. Edgar Hoover, FBI ✓

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9-20-58
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ENCLOSURE

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Tic: 1 - Boardman
1 - Belmont
1 - [redacted]

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March 20, 1958

BY COURIER SERVICE

EX-136

Honorable Robert Cutler
Special Assistant to the President
Executive Office Building
Washington, D. C.

Dear General Cutler:

This will acknowledge your note of March 18, 1958, enclosing copies of a letter to you from [redacted] dated March 13, 1958, and your reply to him dated March 18, 1958. You requested my opinion regarding the incident outlined in [redacted] letter.

In the absence of more specific information concerning the circumstances of the contact between [redacted] and the unknown individual, which it is noted occurred more than three years ago, I am unable to express a definite opinion as to whether this incident has any intelligence significance; however, I agree with the suggestion you made in your reply to [redacted] that [redacted] should report his story to the FBI since it would be a matter of interest to us. In view of the fact you have already suggested such action to [redacted] and, because of the personal and confidential nature of your correspondence with him, we will not at this time undertake personal contact with [redacted] or [redacted].

For your information, the files of this Bureau contain no information identifiable with [redacted].

BY COURIER SVC

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COMM-FBI

Sincerely yours,
J. Edgar Hoover

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Boardman _____
Belmont _____
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Parsons _____
Rosen _____
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Nease _____
Tele. Room _____
Holloman _____
Gandy _____

New York (Enclosures - 3) (See Note Page 2)

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NOTE: Cover memo, Belmont to Boardman prepared by JJT:kg on 3-20-58 re this outgoing mail.

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Honorable Robert Cutler

NOTE FOR SAC, NEW YORK:

For information. No further action to be taken at this time. This matter being carried at Bureau under caption [redacted] Miscellaneous - Information Concerning (Espionage).